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Vol. II. March 6, 1936 Adar 12, 5696 No. 2.

EDITORIALS

ZIONISM AND THE COMMUNISTS

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THE JEW FACES ANTI-SEMITISM

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by Milton Steinberg

JOSEPHUS, THE JEW OF ROME

by Eugene Kohn

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EDITORIALS

Zionism and The Communists

SEVERAL weeks ago, the Communist Party in Palestine issued an inflammatory statement to the Arabs, inciting them to pogromize the Jews. The resentment which this statement aroused among Zionists and non-Zionists in many countries indicated to the Communists that they had violated every humane sensibility; and they hastened to squirm out of their uncomfortable position by branding the statement a "forgery." In some Communist circles, the whole episode was referred to as a "tactical error."

Those who are familiar with the consistent stand taken by Communists on the whole question of Zionism were not completely reassured by the lame excuse offered in connection with the planned pogroms in Palestine; nor were they surprised to discover that a second statement followed soon upon the heels of the first, again urging the Arabs to do away with the Zionists, their "enemies." As an article in the current issue of *Masada* clearly demonstrates, the Communists have fought Zionism tooth and nail from the very early days of the existence of the U.S.S.R.

Why have they opposed Zionism? The reasons given are several: Zionism is the tool of British imperialism; the Arabs are being robbed of their land; Zionists, by encouraging the revival of Hebrew, are actually stimulating the practice of religion (and religion is an evil). Back in 1920, the All-Russian Executive Committee feared that Zionism would drain Russia of Jewish engineers, doctors, pharmacists and architects, whom they needed badly, and who might be tempted to emigrate and settle in Palestine. Since that time, they have persecuted Zionists, sent them to concentration camps, sabotaged whatever legalized attempts they have made to cultivate Hebrew, and by means of various pretexts, have sought to destroy every vestige of Hebraic-Jewish life.

The article to which we have referred concludes with the assertion that the war against Zionism has become "orthodox tradition for communism. Our task in Russia is a much more practical one than trying to bring about a change in policy towards Zionism. The task before us is to help our brother Zionists escape from Russia to Palestine and any negotiations with the Soviet government should deal only with this very practical necessity." We do not share this point of view. First of all, it is ridiculous to attempt to transplant masses of Jews from Russia. World Jewry has enough on its mind at the present time to salvage hundreds of thousands of Jews from Germany and Poland. We have somehow fallen into a "migration" complex. Just because we have been given an opportunity to colonize Palestine, we think that Palestine will take care of all our troubles. It is like the man who has won

five dollars in a card game, and proceeds to buy himself a whole new outfit and pay all his debts on the strength of his winnings.

Secondly, we have greater reason to believe that we can negotiate with the U.S.S.R. than that we can with the Nazis. It is perfectly true that Jews are being persecuted in both countries, albeit for different reasons. But we must not lose sight of certain important facts: (1) That Russia is actually attempting to make it possible for Jews to live. They have outlawed anti-Semitism and have made a breach of the law punishable by fine and imprisonment. We cannot really compare the Communists with the Fascists in this respect. The former are making earnest attempts to root out a social evil; the latter are actively fostering it. (2) The attitude of the Soviet government has changed, during the past few years, in regard to quite a number of their ideological notions. They are taking steps to deprecate the extreme leftist movement in culture and art which indicates that they are confining communism to the specifically economic phases of life and recognizing the need of removing obstacles from the free exercise of the cultural life.

In regard to their foreign policy, they have shown themselves to be "realistic." Antagonists of the regime might well call their course of action "inconsistent" and "unreliable"; those more kindly disposed would be inclined to praise them for their flexibility and their willingness to change their policies in accordance with conditions. We are dealing, finally, with a government which takes cognizance of the Jewish problem, and has seen fit to consider the possibilities of setting aside territory for concentrated Jewish settlement. It seems to us, therefore, that, as time goes on, the U.S.S.R. may be more and more amenable to reason.

If that is the case, we should be prepared to negotiate with the Russian government. But negotiation requires a philosophy and an instrument. We should know exactly on what basis we appeal for consideration and a modification of Russian policy. It is significant that, in dealing with the Nazi persecution of our people, the fact that a very elemental philosophy was necessary made it possible for Jews to create their instrument. Anti-Nazi organizations sprang up quickly after Hitler came into power, and the boycott was soon devised to exert pressure against the German government. But, in dealing with the Russians, Jews have done absolutely nothing, because different tactics were required, tactics that involved meeting the challenge of an ideology. We have mobilized for resistance; we have not succeeded in organizing for negotiation.

We should like to indicate the lines along which such a philosophy would have to be developed; we should have to demonstrate, first, as Hayim Greenberg did recently in the *Jewish Frontier,* that Zionism is not imperialistic, that Judaism has definitely evolved out of the stage of otherworldliness (at least as far as most modern Jews are concerned), and that it has little in common today with the ecclesiastical institutions which stress supernaturalism, blind faith and resignation; it should be demonstrated that the very Palestine which they so oppose is actually the symbol of that transformation of Judaism from a revealed religion with its center of gravity in the hereafter, to a modern civilization; it should be insisted that the nationhood of the Jew is commensurate with the nationhood of the hundred and more ethnic groups that inhabit the Soviet Union and which have enjoyed the encouragement of the government in the revitalization of their cultures.

The instrument by which we might present such a point of view to the Russian government has not yet been evolved. Let us, therefore, strive to develop organizations which are based upon the conception of Judaism as a civilization, organized communities which will be armed with a positive philosophy of Jewish life. As long as our people organize only to fight anti-Semitism, we shall never produce leaders and representatives who will pos-

sess the statesmanship and the skill to carry on negotiations with governments.

In the meantime, we cannot hope to fight Russia. We must utilize the weapons of propaganda and education. We must teach; and we must remember that a teacher makes a serious mistake when he becomes belligerent and abusive. We believe that Nazis cannot be taught; we are not yet convinced that the U.S.S.R. could not be made to understand the problem of Zionism in the right light if proper representations were made to them.

Hopeful Progress

INTEREST in the Samuel-Marks-Birstead mission to America on behalf of German Jewry tended to obscure the interesting proceedings of the annual conference of the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds held in St. Louis during the last days of February. Two facts render these proceedings worthy of a special note. First, the unusually active participation of its lay leaders. Second, their critical attitudes towards present functions and responsibilities of Jewish Federation and Welfare Funds.

Thus, a prominent Council officer and erstwhile defender of Federation policies and purposes, entitled his paper "Does Federation Fit?", and came to the realistic conclusion that it did not fit the Jewish community and its several responsibilities. Especially noteworthy was the address of Mr. Sidney Hollander of Baltimore who, good humoredly, but with conviction and telling effect, depicted the "changing scene" within Jewish community life, and demanded changes "in emphasis in technique and in philosophy" on the part of Federation. Tracing the latter's development in organization and function he did not hesitate to dwell on its failure to respond to community changes and needs. He called on Federation Boards to abandon "depression" psychology and to engage in more permanent planning, to establish a healthier relationship towards and among constituent agencies, to eliminate obsolete and substitute new agencies, and to coordinate functional services so as to insure a more adequate and inclusive community program. He advocated a more professional attitude toward the social worker and deplored the "carrying of employer psychology to Board memberships." He urged courageous leadership and militant activity to obtain necessary legislation for adequate standards of public relief and welfare services, "even at the risk of offending those whose main concern is with taxes or those afflicted with the current psychotic fear of Jewish prominence." Even if some of the present responsibilities of Federations were to be transferred, he felt there were still Jewish services like the "Y" and Jewish cultural and educational activities for which the Jewish community must remain responsible. He concluded by saying that "there has been much difference of opinion as to the values of these cultural agencies and their proper place in Federations organized for philanthropy. Has not the time now come for a re-evaluation?"

This attitude towards educational and communal activities expressed itself more concretely at a sectional meeting devoted to a discussion of the relationship of Jewish educational agencies to Federation and to the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. The president of the Council and several of the lay leaders and social workers actively participated in this meeting. Instead of the expected ten persons, fifty crowded into the committee room and unanimously requested that a permanent Jewish education section be established as a part of the above named Council and that its executive staff include the services of a trained Jewish educator in all matters affecting community problems in Jewish education.

Because we have on occasion criticized the leadership of the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, we are happy to record the important progress in attitude made at the St. Louis conference. Now that the lay leaders have shown the way, would it be too much

to hope that professional workers, too, at their May conference in Atlantic City, will assume a more progressive attitude towards Jewish cultural and communal activities?

The Supreme Court Sustains A Free Press

THE unanimous decision of the Supreme Court to void the law driven through the Louisiana legislature by the late Huey P. Long to tax the gross advertising revenue of the larger newspapers in that state, was rightly hailed as a great victory for the freedom of the press. At a time when so many state legislatures and both Houses of Congress are flooded with bills to restrict freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, with intent to curb if not to throttle all radical and leftist and even regular labor activity, it is good to hear from the Supreme Court of the land such ringing and reassuring words as: "A free press stands as one of the great interpreters between the government and the people," and: "The newspapers, magazines and other journals of the country have shed and continue to shed more light on the public and business affairs of the nation than any other instrument of publicity; and since informal public opinion is the most potent of all restraints upon misgovernment, the suppression or abridgement of the publicity afforded by a free press cannot be regarded otherwise than with grave concern."

A report of this decision appeared on the same day that a cabled report was received from Moscow telling of the stinging rebuke administered to Nikolai Bukharin, chief of the editorial board of *Izvestia,* for characterizing pre-revolutionary Russia as afflicted with Asiatic vagueness and Oriental laziness, and as a land of "oblomovists." The *New York Times* printed both reports in neat juxtaposition, and many an editorial writer availed himself of the opportunity to point a smug homily about the freedom of the press in this country, as compared to that in Soviet Russia. It is worthwhile asking, therefore, how sincere were many of those who sang loud hosannas in praise of the decision.

The same *New York Times,* exercised as it was about the freedom of the press in Louisiana, failed to lift a finger in protest, when District Attorney Dodge of New York County, at the behest of that great American, Hearst, called the editors of the *New Masses,* the *Daily Worker,* and the *Freiheit* for questioning with regard to their activities and opinions; although in this case it was evident that a desire to suppress these publications was behind the questioning. (Only later, at the insistence of many of its readers, did the *Times* make editorial comment and then only in defense of its action and on the flimsy ground that there was no actual suppression of free speech—only an attempt at it.)

It was the publishers who rejoiced most at the decision of the Supreme Court. One wonders, however, in the light of their pronouncements and activities of the past few years, whether it was a concern for the freedom of the press which prompted their jubilance or concern for the revenue which might have been curtailed by such a tax, which was behind their unanimous acclaim of this decision. For let us be candid about the matter. Under the cloak of a desire for freedom of the press, the publishers are attempting to stab to death the Child Labor amendment. Under a guise of concern for the freedom of the press, they fought recognition of the Newspaper Guild. Every time there is danger that their profits may be curtailed, no matter what the measure, the publishers have fought it on the grounds of freedom of the press.

It is good to have the Supreme Court sustain the principle of the freedom of the press, but it is well to pause and observe what sins are committed in the name of that principle.

The Jew Faces Anti-Semitism *

I. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

By MILTON STEINBERG

Introduction

IN all the mass of literature on the subject of anti-Semitism, there is one aspect that has been largely neglected. Very little has been said as yet about the psychological effects on Jews themselves of the hostility which they encounter. And yet, this is by far the most dramatic phase of the whole. For here we are concerned not with cataloging of impersonal facts nor with abstract analyses. Here we deal with individual men, women, and children who sense, or who believe that they sense round about them, an all-enveloping hostility, and who must react emotionally in some way to it.

One of the dangers of anti-Semitism lies in what it does to the Jew as a human being, in its effects on his morale, self-respect and sense of worth. Once this is understood, we shall be in a better position to judge the values of strategies suggested by Jews for facing this vital issue. This article will therefore attempt to deal with this much neglected psychological phase of the problem of anti-Semitism.

I

All diseases, whether individual or social, manifest themselves in two forms, the virulent and acute, on the one hand, and the mild or chronic on the other. Between the phases of an ailment, there is only a difference of intensity. Thus, the tickling sensation produced by the edge of a pin which touches the skin represents the same sensation as the sharp stab of pain when the point is pressed into the tissue. The same instrument is used, the same sensory apparatus responds. The distinction is a matter of degree. But the pin prick may be more dangerous than the stab. For he who is stabbed is acutely conscious of the fact and pulls his flesh away. He who is only mildly irritated may grow accustomed to his discomfort and disregard it until the point of friction becomes an ugly, festering, incurable wound.

The anti-Semitism of today differs from that of a generation ago only as the stab differs from the pin prick—in degree. The prejudice of the contemporary Nazi is derived from the same causes and is, except for its wild intensity, of a piece with that of the Gentile who, twenty-five years ago, blackballed some Jew who sought admission into his club. It is important that this be borne in mind, lest, in our concern over the latest and most spectacular anti-Semitism, we overlook the fact that anti-Semitism has been influencing the Jewish personality quietly and unostentatiously, lest we disregard the possibility that, painful as is today's stab, the irritation of over a century may be the more dangerous. We must remember that for over a century, he has had the experience of an ever increasing growth of intolerance toward him and his group.

The consequence of this pin pricking has been a deep-seated transformation of the Jewish personality. The exclusions and ostracisms to which he has been subjected, the frustrations and denials which have been imposed upon him have operated subtly and inconspicuously, to be sure; but they have been real influences, and their effects have been nonetheless disastrous.

Thus, even under the most favorable conditions, the Jew has been at least in part an outsider in whatever society might be his home. No matter what his theoretical legal rights, he has not been socially, politically or economically quite the equal of his Gentile fellow-citizens. No matter

*This is the first of a series of three articles by Milton Steinberg. The second and third will appear in immediately successive issues.

how cordially he has been received, he has never been altogether wanted. Even in liberal lands, he has been in the position of a well-treated step-child. Favored or maltreated, he has everywhere been the unwanted among the families of men.

Again, the Jew has never been entirely safe. He has had no way of assuring himself of the genuineness of the welcome extended to him in liberal lands, nor any way of guaranteeing its continuance. It has always been possible that rights and privileges might be withdrawn from him. This fact of insecurity has been a constant factor in the life of Jews. Under normal circumstances, this uneasiness has diminished almost to the vanishing point. Fears of any nature, after a while, begin to appear foolish when the event feared fails to occur. People who live on a volcano which has not erupted for some time attain a fair measure of peace of mind—without ever quite losing their fears altogether. But the very knowledge that a volcano has erupted elsewhere is sufficient to evoke the initial dread in all its intensity.

Thirdly, the Jew has often been penalized for his Jewishness. If the Jew who seeks employment were not a Jew, he would find a job more easily. Except for their Jewishness, the student might be admitted to a school of medicine, the instructor might be a professor, the little girl would be enrolled in a fashionable finishing school, and the suburbanites might be members of the local golf club. Were they not Jews, they would have lived a fuller, freer life; they would have been spared the discomforts incidental to their identity.

Last of all, the Jew has been exposed to a hostile world. Anti-Semitic propaganda is addressed to the Gentile world. It cannot but affect the Jew. If the propaganda is effective in reaching the non-Jew, it also touches those against whom it is directed. The Jew today knows what is being said about him. From books and newspapers, from lectures to which he listens, from conversations which he overhears, he learns quickly enough that millions think he and his kind are pretty bad specimens of humanity. He finds himself accused af being obnoxious socially, unclean physically, degraded morally, and, in general, of inferior human stock.

Therefore, the fact of being unwanted, of insecurity, of being penalized for being what he is, and exposure to a hostile propaganda are all the social factors acting upon the personality of the modern Jew. These are the currents which have played uninterruptedly upon him for over a century, even in those "halcyon" days when the name of Hitler was as yet unknown. That these are generally unhealthy influences is immediately apparent. Specifically, these social factors have created within Jews a whole gamut of mental states which account for much that is aberrant and abnormal in Jewish behavior. Thus, for example, from this complex of influences may emerge a profound sense of inferiority, sometimes with elaborate mechanisms of compensation. The consequence may be a resentment againts one's fellow Jews. It may be a contempt of self which emerges, or an impulse to flee one's Jewish identity. The nature of Jewish psychological reactions to the Jewish situation is as variegated and unpredicatable as are all human reactions to a given social situation. But what is certain is that there are emotional reactions which find expression in types of behavior.

II

The various ways in which Jews react to anti-Semitism may be understood by an analogy to bacteriology. The bacteriologist tells us that all of us are constantly under attack from pathogenic organisms—such as those of tuberculosis. Each of us, for example, has had at some time or other to throw off a tuberculosis infection. Most human beings possess sufficient inner resistance to defend themselves without ever becoming conscious of the struggle. Indeed, one sometimes develops an immunity as a result of infection, which may leave one all the stronger. A smaller number become sufficiently disturbed as to be aware of infection. Of these, some recover full health. A still smaller group

is permanently invalided, and the very fewest actually die. The victims of every endemic disease may be represented statistically by a sort of inverted cone formed by the largest area of the unscathed on top, and tapering to the few who perish.

In an exactly analogous fashion, Jews have reacted to the permanent, unwholesome social influences which surround them. Many Jews, perhaps even a vast majority of them, have emerged untouched, entirely sane and balanced in their attitudes toward a Jewish identity. They have escaped infection, in some instances through a natural repulsion of influences which would destroy their self-respect, in others through insensitivity to them, in still others through the fact that they have found in their Jewishness an immunity which spelled compensation and pride; and doubtless, in many cases, through blind luck, such as one who has lived during a plague, by pure fortune, escapes its ravages. A smaller number has been mildly infected, and for all its apparent recovery, reveals traits of mind which indicate that the disease has not been without its permanent consequences. Still fewer have been profoundly corrupted. The very fewest have been spiritually destroyed, having been driven into a sense of shame of self, a shuddering aversion to Judaism and Jews, into a Jewish anti-Semitism, in brief, into a state which is neurotic, psychotic or psychopathic.

At the topmost level, the Jewish response to anti-Semitism expresses itself in acts and emotional postures which, at first glance, do not at all seem significant. Consider, for example, the social stratification of Jews. The Jewish group, which the world carelessly assumes to possess complete internal unity, is actually divided into fairly sharp classes. Spanish and Portuguese Jews feel themselves superior to German Jews. German Jews look down upon East Europeans. Various types of East European Jews are contemptful of each other. And all alike condescend to those Spanish and Portuguese Jews who now live in the Levant. Every group of Jews holds an attitude of condescension.

Now, to be sure, all groups of human beings divide themselves into classes. It is apparently an unlovely human necessity that men must have someone to despise. In Jews, then, the stratification of classes is by no means a unique phenomenon. And yet, it possesses among Jews a special quality all its own. For here we find revealed the workings of the sense of being outsiders. Excluded socially by everyone else, the Jew must exclude somebody. He excludes other Jews. Now, of course, this is not an especially serious phenomenon. It is, in America, a stage in Jewish evolution which is rapidly being outgrown. But it is a significant symptom.

Descending deeper into the cone, we come upon a type of Jewish behavior which is of much graver importance: the tendency of Jews to blame each other. As with groups, so Jews individually blame each other for their unfortunate position. The Jewish conservative accuses the radical of responsibility for anti-Semitism, the radical blames the capital-

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ist. Jews scrutinize each others' manners, morals and etiquette, always discovering in others the undesirable. Thus it comes to pass that the Jew stands before the world pointing an accusing finger at his fellows, hoping that the Gentiles will dissociate him from other Jews, that they will observe that he at least is "different" in his freedom from those traits which make Jews generally obnoxious. Jewish life is filled with an unwholesome self-consciousness, with distasteful mutual scrutiny and with the unseemly din of accusation and counter-accusation.

The psychological nature of this attitude will be clear to anyone who has had the experience of attempting to discover who, among a group of young children, has been responsible for some bit of misbehavior. Instinctively each child will point to another in the effort to divert chastisement from himself. It is merely the old story of the scapegoat to whose head sins real or supposed may be shifted. For no Jew is willing to admit to himself that he possesses those traits which Gentiles contend are responsible for their attitude. He quite naturally then looks to other Jews.

This mutual condemnation is intensified by the fact that Jews, because of their social position, are likely to resent each other, for all Jews, by their very existence, are responsible for the difficulties which the individual faces. If there were no Jews, a single Jew would experience no anti-Semitism. Only the presence of numbers of Jews makes Jewishness the burden which it is. When medical schools adopt quotas, every Jew admitted keeps out another. From this point of view, every additional Jew is a threat to all his fellows. Furthermore, there exists a close and direct relationship between the numbers of Jews and the extent and intensity of anti-Semitic feeling. The smaller the body of Jews, the more easily it escapes unfriendly attention. There is in an anti-Semitic world only a limited amount of social advantage available to all Jewry—a sort of ration of jobs, acceptances and opportunities. Each additional Jew is to every other another mouth to be fed from the common fund when there is not enough to go around. In the unfair ascription of responsibility can be detected the pique and resentment created by this unnatural competition between Jews for Gentile acceptance.

The hostile opinion of the non-Jewish world operates equally at this level of Jewish psychology. Confronted by anti-Semitism, the Jew very naturally is likely to reason with himself that the whole world cannot be insane, that where there is smoke there is fire, and that even if he personally does not deserve the unkind things which are said about him, other Jews do. And so he proceeds to scrutinize his fellows, and as would be the case with any social group, he finds some individuals who merit fully the accusations which disturb him. He goes through life constantly seeking and attempting to correct in other Jews those failings which give aid and comfort to the enemy. By a strange paradox, the Jew, who is the victim of anti-Semitic propaganda, is victimized in a fashion which the authors of that propaganda never envisaged. He is susceptible of being convinced by it.

Of graver import is the tendency on the part of many Jews to play down their Jewishness. There are any number of Jews who are flattered when they are told that they do not look Jewish. The zeal with which Jews imitate the Gentiles who surround them, their persistent use of conspicuously non-Jewish names for their children, their wanton abandonment of the forms of their own tradition, and their reckless remaking of themselves into Gentile patterns, all these are more than the natural imitation of a majority by a minority. The very fact that Jews often criticize a gesture, act or attitude by declaring it "too Jewish" is in itself a give-away. Obviously, no person who respects himself for what he is will be pleased at being taken for what he is not. Note that no typical American feels that anything can be too-American, no German that he

is derogated by being described as too-German, any more than the normal human being feels that he can be too much himself. Only members of groups who have become uncertain of the value of either themselves or of their group are uneasy lest they conform too completely to their essential character.

III

Descending still further into the ever constructing cone, we consider the effort occasionally made by Jews to escape their identity, or to use a phrase borrowed from the Negro, to "pass". This attempt is made along various lines. Sometimes the fugitive changes his name, disassociates himself from his group, deliberately conceals his origins, denies altogether that he is Jewish and sedulously seeks acceptance from Gentiles. He may formally enter a Christian faith or some cult which, without being officially Christian, is nevertheless not Jewish. The whole effort in these days of intensified anti-Semitism is rarely effective. That fact has served neither to discourage aspirants, nor to make their objective the less desirable in their eyes. It is at this point that the lesser phases of Jewish psychic disturbance begin to border on the more acute, the psychotic. For we are here handling a type of flight from self. The very phrase—flight from self—is strongly suggestive of a mental attitude with which psychiatrists deal constantly. To the normal Jew and Gentile alike the Jew who seeks to "pass" is an unpleasant person. There is in him when he is exposed a hypocricy, and dishonesty, a sailing under false colors, a suggestion of guile and deceit, and a suspicion of having deserted one's own, which are heavily repugnant. And, of necessity, he must be a tortured, twisted and unhappy person himself. No one is in such a painful situation as that human being who seeks to escape from himself and his past and who finds, wherever he goes, that, like his shadow, he has carried both with himself.

To all this Jewish malaise close analogies exist in the careers of other submerged minority groups. Louis Adamic in his article entitled "Thirty Million New Americans" draws a picture of the psychology of the children of recent immigrants to America. Here, too, there is discerned a strong sense of social inferiority which grows in direct proportion with the dissolution of the traditional culture of the immigrant. The results are exactly those which we have found among Jews. Any one who has read James Waldon Johnson's "Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man" or Moton's "How the Negro Thinks" will find a host of parallels. Nor is this at all surprising. Similar circumstances yield similar results. Given a minority group which has been torn loose from its ancestral patterns and values and which faces exclusion and ostracism, and contempt for self and resentment against the group are inevitable.

The Jewish anti-Semite is the last logical consequence of general anti-Semitism. This is the Jew who feeling himself unwanted and insecure, knowing that he is penalized because he is a Jew, accepting as valid hostile Gentile opinion about Jews and possessing no inner powers to preserve his self-respect, has come ultimately to despise himself, to hate his fellow-Jews and Judaism because they are all Jewish. With him we are at the bottom of the cone, in the realm of the psychotic and insane.

For our source material on this manifestation of the effects of anti-Semitism on the Jewish personality, we turn to the volume entitled *Judische Selbst-Hass* by Theodore Lessing, pacifist, defender of the Weimar Republic, philosopher and Jew, who was murdered by Nazi assassins at Marienbad during the summer of 1933. In this book Lessing sets himself to an analysis of Jewish anti-Semitism, to a description of exceptional and flagrant instances of Jewish psychopathology, the cases being drawn from the lives of gifted and brilliant German and Austrian Jews. Of the variety of instances which Lessing adduces, one or two will serve as speci-

mens. There is, for example, the case of Arthur Trebitsch whose life is summarized as follows:

"Arthur Trebitsch, born in 1879 in Vienna, of Jewish stock, gifted as poet, philosopher, and student of political science, author of approximately twenty books and countless essays, was until his death on September 26, 1927, the wildest persecutor of Jews." Then follows the fantastic story of a handsome, blonde Jew who was convinced of the existence of an international Jewish conspiracy against Aryanism, who chose as his comrades-in-arms in his crusade against Semitism, people like Eric Ludendorff. Trebitsch ended his days insane, obsessed with the thought that attempts on his life were being constantly made by Jews.

Not all of Lessing's case histories manifest conscious Jewish anti-Semitism. Not all his analyses ring true, but enough convincing material is produced to demonstrate that the self-hate which he described has been in many instances responsible for intellectual sterility in gifted souls, for curious fanaticisms and deep emotional instabilities.

But the most awesome passage in Lessing's work is found in an appendix, in which Lessing quotes from a diary, dated as of 1920, written by a woman whom he describes as important, well-born, beautiful, healthy and gifted, but who is sick in soul. An extract will speak for itself.

"I force myself not to think of it. To no avail. It thinks in me, thinks by itself, consults neither my wish, will, nor the natural drive to flee from the painful, hateful, deadly. It is always present, always in me: *This consciousness of my descent.* As a leper or one sick with cancer bears his nauseating disease, concealed under his cloak and is nevertheless conscious of it in every instant, so do I bear the disgrace and shame, the metaphysical guilt of my Jewishness.

"What are other pains, disappointments and restraints which come from without, compared to this hell within? To have to be that which one detests! To be *compelled* to be, yes, to be compelled. For devices, extenuations and self-deceits do no good here. I am conscious, clearly, pitilessly, Jewishness is a matter of *being.* It cannot be shaken off. As little as a dog or swine can cast off its doggishness or swinishness, so little do I tear myself from the ties of being which bind me to that stage which lies between man and beast, from Jews.

"Were I a murderer, were I a thief, had I committed the most pitiable, most execrable act—I would nevertheless stand guiltless before the Eternal. But never, so long as I live, am I able to strip from myself the curse of my identity, never can I deny the sin of my Jewishness, the eternal metaphysical original sin which weighs upon me as heavily as mountains. I know myself as cursed and damned. . . ."

There is more like this. But this specimen quite suffices for our purposes. It is all there—the hatred of self, the revulsion against one's identity, the hatred of one's fellows—shot through in this case with sheer madness. In this frothing insane outpouring can be caught a glimpse of the bottomless pit into which some Jews are pushed by anti-Semitism.

IV

It was Goethe who once said that the heart of the spiritual difficulties of modern men lay in the fact that they thought ill of themselves. There is no external evil which one cannot flee or to which, if flight is impossible, one cannot make some tolerable adjustment. But that malaise which springs from self-discontent can serve only to embitter and corrupt life. It cannot be escaped and adaptation to it is impossible. To come to terms with an unpleasant reality demands courage, will and a sense that one's personality is worth the effort. These are the very conditions which are absent in the soul that has been led to self-revulsion. In this lies the refined spiritual cruelty of anti-Semitism, together with all persecution of minority groups. The victim is despoiled of

more than things exterior to himself. He is fatally affected within himself.

In the light of our description of the psychological consequences of anti-Semitism, the problem of the position of the Jew can be envisaged in its entirety. It is not true as is commonly assumed that the only perils of anti-Semitism are those which affect his body, his possessions, or his rights. Nor is it true that anti-Semitism harms the Jew only when it becomes extreme and violent as it is for example in Germany today. The danger reaches into the realm of the spirit. It is a matter not alone of violent explosions but of the atmosphere which Jews breathe all the time. It is because of the failure to recognize these more subtle and elusive aspects of the question that most approaches to a solution of the problem lack realism. Those who fight anti-Semitism tend to concentrate on the obvious physical exhibitions of it, and on those which are most conspicuous. Every such effort is important and valuable. But no program is complete which does not concern itself with the psychology of the Jew and with those influences which constantly and, even in periods of relative tolerance, work destructively upon the Jew.

It must be understood, to perceive the psychology of the Jew in its completeness, that something has disappeared from the lives of masses of Jews. The medieval Jew was subjected to a full-blooded anti-Semitism beside which contemporary Jew-baiting at its worst seems anemic. His exclusion was absolute, his security, even of life, non-existent. Whatever anti-Semitism might do to his person and possessions, it scarcely touched him spiritually. Certainly, he was never led to a hatred or contempt either of himself or his group. His religious tradition invested him with self-respect as a member of the chosen people. He lived his entire life within Jewish society; he depended therefore not at all on acceptance by Gentiles. Above all, he knew his traditional culture thoroughly. He identified himself with its spiritual heroes and their achievements. His recognition of their moral worth immunized him against the corrosion by hostility of his sense of personal worth.

These preservative psychic factors are now gone. The Jew of today has either abandoned the religious tradition of his past or else has failed so to interpret it as to make it effective in giving him a special feeling of importance. Of his total time and energy, but a limited portion is spent in Jewish association. He needs acceptance by the non-Jewish world, needs it for his economic, political and intellectual life, and in some measure, even in his social intercourse. And, if he is at all typical, he knows little or nothing of the culture of his ancestors. When he finds himself reviled he has no folk heroes to whom he can look to restore his pride. In the face of persecution, he cannot tell himself that he is suffering for something inherently worth while. His Jewishness deprives him of privileges without affording him the compensation in the form of enjoyment of and participation in an ancient civilization. The average Jew is without spiritual resources as a Jew to serve as a prophylactic against the subtle influences which play upon him.

The problem of what can be done about anti-Semitism, and since it gives doleful promise of being a hardy perennial, of how Jews shall face it, must be left to the sequels to this article. Here it has been the author's purpose to awaken Jews to a truth that has been almost universally overlooked, the fact that anti-Semitism is a matter not of body, property, or privileges alone, that it touches and affects disastrously the soul of the Jew. This fact must be reckoned with when Jews consider tactics and strategies of self-defense.

Josephus, The Jew of Rome

By EUGENE KOHN

THE spirit of our age has produced a new type of historical novel. In the past, historical fiction was usually written by romanticists with a view to affording an escape from the harsh realities of present day life. Viewing a mountain from a distance, we see it glorified by a haze of blue that conceals its scarred and jagged surface and reveals only the beauty of its general contour. A similar illusion veils the reality of past ages from us. A haze of legend obscures the complexities of the social scene and tends to make historic characters appear greater and more heroic than they really were. Historical fiction has until recently but served to add to the haze and has indulged freely in the glorification and idealization of the past. Its authors took their readers on an excursion into past ages which, like most travel in foreign parts, was designed as a diversion from the cares and problems that beset us today.

But more recently a new kind of historical novel has made its appearance. In novels of this kind, the author uses the apparatus of historical criticism to penetrate the haze of legend and reveal to us the past as it appeared to those for whom it was the present. Characters are not idealized to conform to the legend created by popular imagination, but are treated with psychological realism on the assumption that human nature has not changed. Such fiction frequently gives us a better insight into the past than do the works of painstaking historians.

The analytic method of historians often prevents us from seeing the forest by reason of the trees, but the artistic imagination of the writer of fiction is synthetic rather than analytic and grasps the historic situation in its entirety. He begins where the scientific historian too frequently leaves off. He takes the neatly classified data of the historian and reconstructs the living image of the age. As in the vision of Ezekiel, the dead bones of past generations gather together, are covered with flesh and are inspired with the spirit of life until the past is resurrected before our eyes. In contrast with the older type of historic fiction, it is not the strangeness of the past but its similarity to the present that is emphasized. The problems with which the characters grapple are modern problems or rather permanent problems which assume different forms in different ages. The advantages of using a past era to illustrate present problems lies in the greater objectivity with which we can view them, when they are presented to us in terms of the experiences of another age than our own.

Lion Feuchtwanger's "Josephus" and its sequel, "The Jew of Rome" * are historical novels of this modern type. The problem with which they deal is that which has confronted the Jews ever since the dispersion, the necessity of living at one and the same time in two different civilizations. The perplexing inconsistencies in the career of Josephus are interpreted in the light of this problem.

Josephus, at the outbreak of the war with Rome, was in command of the Jewish forces in Galilee. But after the battle of Jotapata, he surrendered to Rome and accepted favors and distinctions from the Roman conqueror, Vespasian. He was with the Roman armies at the siege of Jerusalem and later wrote the history of the war with Rome as well as a comprehensive history of the Jews and a defense against the libels of the Jew-hater, Apion. All these works were manifestly designed to put the Jews in a favorable light with the other peoples of the Roman Empire. Was Josephus a traitor? If so, why did

*Viking Press, New York, 1936.

he devote his life to apologetics in defense of his people? Was Josephus a loyal Jew? If so, how account for his desertion of the Jewish cause in a critical time and his consorting with the enemies of Judea?

Feuchtwanger explains the inconsistencies in the behavior of Josephus in terms of the natural responses of an ambitious, sensitive and philosophic personality who is confronted with the necessity of adjusting himself to two different worlds, the world of Rome and that of Jewry. For Josephus to have cast his lot wholly with the Jewish people would have meant to court martyrdom without thereby benefiting his people. It would also have involved the suppression of his literary gift and his genuine interest in the culture of the Greco-Roman world. But for him to have cast his lot wholly with Rome would have meant to tear up his personality by the roots, to betray all that he held holy and to cut off the ties that bound him to the only community which, notwithstanding its resentment of his conduct, accepted him as one of its own. Consequently he steers a zig-zag course between the two poles of attraction, Rome and Judea. Sometimes he seeks a synthesis of Jewish and Greco-Latin culture in a religious cosmopolitanism that stresses the universal aspect of Judaism and tries to fuse it with the philosophy of the Greeks. But to no avail. Again and again Roman imperialism on the one hand and Jewish nationalism on the other make a practical application of such a philosophy impossible and confront him with the challenge: "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?"

At times, listening to the voice of ambition or of affection for his Egyptian wife and the son she has born him, Josephus sacrifices his Jewish interests, justifying himself by some facile rationalization. But when he has attained his immediate purposes in so doing, he finds that he is as far as ever from having bridged the gap between him and his Gentile associates and kin, and has but widened the chasm between him and his fellow Jews. He then seeks some grandiose gesture of loyalty to his people. But, more often than not, the result of his activity in behalf of his fellow Jews turns to their hurt rather than to their benefit. "Josephus is a scoundrel." Such is the verdict of his literary rival and the companion of his youth, the historian Justus.

But if by a scoundrel we mean a person who is ruthlessly selfish and unscrupulous in obtaining his ends, Josephus, as Feuchtwanger presents him to us, is anything but a scoundrel. He is forever weighing the right and wrong of his actions; and it is precisely because he is sensitive, conscientious and alive to the ethical implications of all his relationships that he is perpetually torn by conflicting loyalties. Naturally, passion and self-interest sometimes determine the issue and becloud his ethical judgment. But such aberrations are usually followed by moments of illumination which bring him intense self-reproach and remorse. The inner struggle in the soul of Josephus is significant because the Jewish problem reaches its most intense focus in the spiritual conflicts to which the geniuses in Israel are subject by reason of their sensitivity to the opposing demands and influences of their social and cultural environment. "The greater the man, the greater is his Evil Inclination."

II

The same problem of adjustment to the conditions of life in the diaspora shows up also in the lives of the other Jewish characters of the book. Many of these are historical personalities although they are sometimes disguised under fictitious names, doubtless, to permit the author greater latitude in his treatment of them. He seems, for instance, to have drawn upon the characters of Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Joshua and Rabbi Meir for his fictitious character of Ben Ismael. What is more, Feuchtwanger shows us how the necessity of adjusting Jewish life to bring it into harmony with Rome and

the Roman world was responsible for historical events of major importance.

The growing tendency of the scholars of Jabne to hedge about Jewish law with minute regulations that made it difficult to observe, Feuchtwanger ascribes to the policy of Rabban Gamliel to keep Judaism a strictly national religion, lest the spread of its propaganda become offensive to the Roman authorities. For there was great danger that Rome, if displeased, would withdraw the privileges of the academy at Jabne, the new seat of Jewish legal authority, upon which the whole future of Judaism depended.

On the other hand, the Ebionites or Judeo-Christians reacted to the changed circumstances of life, since the Roman conquest and the destruction of the Temple, by making grace of what appeared to be necessity through the renunciation of all the national aspirations of the Jewish people. They accordingly emphasized the mystical and humanitarian aspects of Judaism in line with the widening social and spiritual horizons arising from contact with the other peoples of the Empire. Their answer to Rome's objection to the proselytizing activities of the Jews was to accept proselytes without insisting on rigid conformity to Jewish ritual law particularly as regards circumcision. This enabled them to avoid the scrutiny of the Roman authorities, who, while tolerant of Judaism, were opposed to the spread of its propaganda. Thus the two antagonistic policies arising in response to Rome's objection to Jewish missionary activity resulted in a complete breach between Judaism and Christianity, although such a breach had originally been contemplated neither by the disciples of Jesus nor by the Rabbis who opposed his teachings and those of his disciples.

Is there any solution to the problem presented by the book? The author does not offer any. Perhaps the difficulties experienced by Josephus are inherent in the situation of a national and religious minority. Nevertheless life might be made easier for people like Josephus, if the synthesis which he sought between nationalism and universalism, tradition and modernism, Hebraism and Hellenism were a conscious objective of organized Jewish life, if the Jewish community itself assumed responsibility for helping the individual Jew adjust himself to the dominant civilization in a manner that would not involve a repudiation of Judaism or the surrender of any of its essential values. That is what Reconstructionism is seeking in our day. If it succeeds, many a Jewish genius may in the future be spared the torments to which the soul of Josephus was subjected.